

The original documents are located in Box 32, “5/19/76 - Remarks on the Acceptance of the Gift of a Sound and Light Display from President Valery Giscard d'Estaing of France” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN...

SOUND AND LIGHT DISPLAY

MT. VERNON

MAY 19, 1976

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MR. PRESIDENT, MADAME GISCARD D'ESTAING

(ZHEES-CAR DESTANG) , DISTINGUISHED GUESTS, LADIES AND

GENTLEMEN:

I AM GREATLY HONORED TO ACCEPT THIS MAGNIFICENT
PRESENTATION ON BEHALF OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE.

IT IS AN INGENIOUS AND GENEROUS GIFT -- A SYMBOL OF THE
COMMON HERITAGE OF FRIENDSHIP AND DEVOTION TO FREEDOM WHICH
DISTINGUISHES THE HISTORIC TIES BETWEEN OUR COUNTRIES.

THIS "SOUND AND LIGHT" DISPLAY WILL TAKE
ITS PLACE WITH YOUR COUNTRY'S GIFT IN 1876 TO OUR CENTENNIAL --
THE STATUE OF LIBERTY.

IT HAS BECOME A SYMBOL OF AMERICA AS WELL AS
A CONTINUING REMINDER OF THE INSPIRING VALUES WE SHARE.

FOR MANY GENERATIONS "THE LADY WITH THE LAMP" HAS WELCOMED
MILLIONS OF IMMIGRANTS "YEARNING TO BREATHE FREE."

LIKE THE STATUE OF LIBERTY, THE MOUNT VERNON
SOUND AND LIGHT DISPLAY WILL BE A CONTINUOUS CELEBRATION OF
THE PRINCIPLES OF LIBERTY SHARED BY OUR TWO REPUBLICS.

THERE COULD BE NO MORE HISTORIC OR SUITABLE
SITE THAN MOUNT VERNON FOR FRANCE TO HONOR OUR BICENTENNIAL.
IT WAS HERE ON SEPTEMBER 9, 1782, THAT GENERAL WASHINGTON
ARRIVED JUST BEFORE THE DECISIVE BATTLE AT YORKTOWN.

HE WAS JOINED BY FRENCH GENERALS ROCHAMBEAU (ROW-SHAM-BOW)
AND CHASTELLUX (SH'AZ-TEL-YUH). IT WAS FROM HERE THAT
THE AMERICAN COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF AND HIS FRENCH ALLIES RODE
TO YORKTOWN AND INTO THE PAGES OF HISTORY.

MR. PRESIDENT, TODAY, AT YORKTOWN,
YOU PERSONALLY COMMEMORATED OUR JOINT VICTORY.
WE ARE PROUD TO SHARE OUR "DAY OF GLORY" WITH YOU.

GEORGE WASHINGTON'S LOVE OF MOUNT VERNON IS

WELL-KNOWN. IT WAS TO MOUNT VERNON THAT HIS THOUGHTS
TURNED DURING THE DIFFICULT, OFTEN DISCOURAGING, CAMPAIGNS
OF THE WAR OF THE REVOLUTION AND DURING HIS PRESIDENCY.

VISITORS TO MOUNT VERNON WILL NOW HEAR, SEE
AND FEEL THE EMOTIONS AROUSED BY THE CREATION OF THE UNITED
STATES OF AMERICA, BY WASHINGTON'S MEETING WITH LAFAYETTE,
AND BY THE FRIENDSHIP OF OUR TWO COUNTRIES.

MR. PRESIDENT, I ASK YOU TO CONVEY TO THE
PEOPLE OF FRANCE, THE HEARTFELT THANKS OF THE AMERICAN
PEOPLE FOR THIS SUPERB DISPLAY OF "SOUND AND LIGHT" AND FOR THE
UNIQUE RELATIONSHIP IT SYMBOLIZES.

END OF TEXT

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN. . .

SOUND AND LIGHT DISPLAY

MOUNT VERNON, VIRGINIA

WEDNESDAY, MAY 19, 1976

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THERE COULD BE NO MORE HISTORIC OR SUITABLE SITE
THAN MOUNT VERNON FOR FRANCE TO HONOR OUR BICENTENNIAL.
IT WAS HERE ON SEPTEMBER 9, 1781, THAT GENERAL WASHINGTON
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